

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 112640
ORIGIN NEA-04

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DRAFTED BY: NEA: EGABINGTON, JR.: SEB

APPRVED BY: NEA: EGABINGTON, JR

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

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FOR HIRSCH

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 3437 ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN
CAIRO DAMASCUS HJERUSALEM MAY 16.

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TEL AVIV 3437

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, IS

SUBJECT: NRP LEADER REITERATES INSISTENCE ON NATIONAL UNITY
GOVERNMENT

1. IN A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF ON MAY 15, NRP
LEADER YEHUDA BEN-MEIR REPEATED HIS PARTY'S KNOWN
POSITION THAT SHOULD THE NRP BE INDISPENSABLE TO
FORMING A COALITION, IT WOULD INSIST ON A NATIONAL UNITY
GOVERNMENT (NUG). ASKED WHETHER THE NRP'S INSISTENCE
ON A NUG WOULD BE ITS RESPONSE TO AN INVITATION OT
JOIN A LIKUD-LED COALITION AS WELL AS ONE DOMINATED
BY THE ALIGNMENT, HE REPLIED THAT ITS ANSWER WOULD BE
THE SAME TO BOTH MAJOR PARTIES.

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PAGE 02 STATE 112640

2. HOWEVER, BEN-MEIR ADMITTED THAT THE STIFFNESS OF
THIS POSITION DEPENDED ON THE ELECTION RESULTS AND
THUS ON THE FACTOR OF THE NRP'S INDISPENSABILITY. IN
FACT, HE WOULD NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT EVEN
IF THE ALIGNMENT AND THE DMC ALONE ARE ABLE TO
FORM A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT, THE NRP MIGHT JOIN
SUCH A COALITION. (IN THIS CASE THE OTHER TWO

PARTIES MIGHT WISH TO HAVE THE NRP IN THE
COALITION IN ORDER TO EXPAND ITS BASE AND GIVE IT
A LARGER, MORE COMFORTABLE MAJORITY IN THE KNESSET.)

3. BEN-MEIR, HOWEVER, SAW THE PROSPECTS FOR FORMING
A NUG AS VERY GOOD AND BELIEVED IT WOULD OCCUR
EARLY IN THE GOVERNMENT-FORMATION PROCESS. AS ONE
REASON FOR HIS OPTIMISM, HE SAID THE MAPAM HAD
MOUNTED VIGOROUS CAMPAIGN AMONG ITS KIBBUTZIM
OVER THE WEEKEND TO COMBAT SERIOUS IN-ROADS BY
SHELLI. ACCORDING TO BEN-MEIR, IF THE ELECTION
RESULTS SHOW THAT 25 PERCENT OR MORE OF MAPAM
KIBBUTZNIKS HAD VOTED SHELLI, PERES WILL IGNORE
MAPAM OBJECTIONS TO A NUG AND WILL ARGUE THAT
THE LABOR PARTY GAVE MAPAM ASSURED PLACES ON THE
ALIGNMENT LIST AND THEN RECEIVED POOR SUPPORT
FROM THE MAPAM RANK AND FILE.

4. BEN-MEIR THOUGHT THE NRP WOULD WIN 10 OR 11
SEATS. ASKED ABOUT OTHER PARTIES, HE
CITED A POLL TAKEN THE MIDDLE OF LAST
WEEK BY AN ORGANIZATION HE CALLED HIGHLY REPUTABLE.
NONETHELESS, BECAUSE OF ITS SURPRISING RESULTS HE
HESITATED TO GIVE THE POLL MUCH CREDENCE. ITS
FINDINGS: LIKUD - 41 SEATS; ALIGNMENT 31;
DMC 14 - 15 (COMMENT: WE SHARE BEN-MEIR'S
DISBELIEF . WE ANTICIPATE THE CLOSE ELECTION--
SEPTTEL--BUT THE ALIGNMENT STILL APPEARS TO
HOLD AN EDGE OVER THE LIKUD.)
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PAGE 03 STATE 112640

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Message Attributes

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